

Senate Resolution No. 29

Introduced by Senator Alquist

Relative to Alzheimer's disease.

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is a slow, progressive disorder of the brain that results in loss of memory and other cognitive function and, eventually, death; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States and currently affects an estimated 2.4 million to 4.5 million Americans; and

WHEREAS, In California alone, it is estimated that more than 588,000 people have Alzheimer's disease, and that number is expected to double by the year 2030; and

WHEREAS, The stigma associated with Alzheimer's disease results in a delay of diagnosis, in some cases up to six years; and

WHEREAS, Alzheimer's disease takes an enormous toll on family members, with an estimated one in four acting as caregivers for each individual with the disease; and

WHEREAS, Caregivers for individuals with Alzheimer's disease suffer from increased levels of stress and depression, which can create health problems that differ from those of caregivers of people with other illnesses; and

WHEREAS, Recent advancements in scientific research have demonstrated the benefits of early medical treatment for individuals with Alzheimer's disease, as well as the benefits of early access to counseling and other support services for their caregivers; and

WHEREAS, With early diagnosis, individuals can avoid or correct contributing medical problems, commence available therapy, organize current and future care, and enhance self-determination, and caregivers can identify and embrace community support services; and

WHEREAS, In direct response to research breakthroughs, National Memory Screening Day was established by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) as a collaborative effort with local organizations and health care professionals across the country to promote awareness, early

detection, and early diagnosis of memory impairment so that individuals can obtain proper medical treatment, social services, and other resources related to their condition; and

WHEREAS, National Memory Screening Day is held by the AFA each November in recognition of National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, and on this day health care professionals administer free, confidential, face-to-face memory screenings at hundreds of sites throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, Memory screening is not used to diagnose any illness, but is used as an indicator to determine whether a person might benefit from further examination by a qualified health care provider; and

WHEREAS, Memory screenings are a safe and cost-effective intervention to direct at-risk individuals to appropriate clinical resources, thus reducing the costs of long-term care or hospitalization resulting from undiagnosed complications; and

WHEREAS, Screenings also greatly benefit those with normal scores by checking their memory, allaying fears, and promoting chronic disease prevention and successful aging; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate recognizes the seriousness of Alzheimer's disease and the toll it takes on individuals with the disease and their caregivers; and

Resolved, That the Senate acknowledges that more outreach and education is needed to eliminate the stigma associated with the disease and assist individuals and their caregivers in identifying available screenings, treatments, and support; and

Resolved, That the Senate encourages all Americans with memory concerns or who want to check their memory to have annual memory screenings administered at National Memory Screening Day sites or by other qualified professionals; and

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates state and local organizations representing individuals with memory problems, caregivers, and health care professionals for their commitment to improving the quality of life of individuals confronting dementia and their families by providing optimal care and services; and

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and National Memory Screening Day, including the development of a state health policy on dementia screening and care; and

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

Senate Resolution No. 29 read and adopted by the Senate September 11, 2009.

Attest: _____
Secretary of the Senate